

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Aureo Andino
Juan Rosario
Jose Matos
Rafael Valentin
William Radinson
Luis Martinez
Luis Rivera Castano
Fernando Milan

FROM: Lydia Hernandez Velez

RE: April 2, 3 1987 Retreat

I reviewed my notes of the retreat and knowing how difficult it is to capture the essence of what happens at such events, I thought it might be helpful to share my own notes of what transpired for Juan and Fernando. Once I was thinking about it, I decided to share them with everyone.

FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 1987

We began the process of our retreat by viewing the movie Koayinskasu (Aureo can correct the spelling) which depicted the level of disarray of our society while leaving the sense that in all the madness and rushing towards unknown futures, there are constant opportunities that present themselves. Some of the opportunities lead to higher good and development of persons, organizations and the world, others are opportunities to create our own destruction.

We then engaged in a discussion of what each of us expected of the retreat and why we felt it was important to engage in the activity. Most of the comments related to the need to develop a unitary vision of Aspira in its component manifestations as the associates and the national association. We also felt that our future should be something we go towards, not something that happens to us. Juan noted that there are many organizations that are taking initiatives to meet the new challenges.

We spent time discussing how we saw our limitations, i.e., what have we been doing that has lead to this sense of "dissatisfaction" for lack of a better word. We each stated what we thought was the success of Aspira, the individuals who participated in our programs and are now productive and contributing members to the society in which they live. We identified our need to communicate that success as a means for funding our future activities. We spent some time identifying a role for the national office, that of a communicator of the issues and successes we have encountered in our work, networking

the association with the powers that be and potential allies in our struggle to foment success in our youth.

After lunch, we discusses the positioning of Aspira presently and where we want it to be.

We shared our experiences throughout the associates, with anecdotal evidence of the difference that Aspira made in our lives and the lives of persons we knew and the difference Aspira made in the cities we have been operating vis a vis the school and political systems.

We shared some of the imponderables we encountered, i.e., the shifts in the national identity of the latino populations we service, hard decisions that had to be made or will have to be made. We spoke about what we saw as our individual futures in hopes that such thoughts might set off our consideration of the collective future.

In the process, we identified a new word for the vocabulary of Aspira, thanks to Jose Matos, ASPIROLOGIA.¹

SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 1987

We began by discussing and putting on poster board, the different functions in which we might be engaged as a Board of Directors member of an associate and Board of Directors member of a national office. We then wrote down the functions of a National Executive Director and an Associate Executive Director. (Juan collected these materials which should be shared with the entire board at the July meeting.)

We came to a better sense of comfort of what we were expecting to accomplish as a national board and the direction we seek to give to the national executive. We identified the unclear areas, i.e., does the national director merely receive information or is he a hands on, direct dealing problem solver. What are the derivative missions for the organizational concepts of an association and an associate. What are the concomitant issues that are left to resolve.

We then clarified what the process had been up to that point and Juan shared with us his vision of what he hoped it would be.

After lunch, we engaged in an intensive exercise regarding the relationship with the future as very skillfully led by Aureo. We considered the types of futures:

1. cosas que son de o tocante a Aspira.

probable future - happens whether or not you do anything
possible future - happens with input from the individual
desireable future - you want it to happen and can work to
making it occur

We each then outlined on a personal level our probable future. We then each outlined a desireable future for Aspira and tallied these for the consensus of the group. Juan kept the total list. I noted these as the top four items: a strong financial base, the establishment of an Aspira Alumni network, joint ventures with community based organizations and expansion.

We then began a "blue sky" process of idea development and agreed on one concrete item.

We agreed to develop a National Convocation in 1988. The Ad Hoc Committee was formed composed of Bill Radinson, Rafael Valentin and myself. We discussed a variety of possible options including having students, staff and board members from all associates, having key speakers, having an Aspirante Hall of Fame, having a Youth Leadership component for a national ACF meeting, etc.

We then talked about our reactions to the retreat and on the whole, we concluded that it had been a worthwhile venture and that the ideas we discussed must be shared with the rest of the group. It was even suggested that some of the exercises we engaged in should be done by the entire national board.

I hope these notes will be helpful to everyone and will keep the momentum (the bid "MO") so we can all feel that we are headed in the direction of the highest good of all concerned.

GRACIAS